

THE 242

METHOD

THE ANTI PROGRAM HOPPING

INJURY REDUCING STRENGTH

SOLUTION

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## **About the author**

Hi. My name is Anthony Mychal. I'm a writer that hangs around the health, performance, strength, fitness and tricking circles.

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## Preamble

There are thousands of programs floating in the fitness world, and hundreds more floating in my head.

For the most part, however, I don't like programs—kind of contradictory as this *is* a program. Well, sort of. It's more of a method. But programs lead to program hopping, and program hopping is a sin.

As someone that throws ideas into the world for consumption, however, I can't help but parallel life events with fitness concepts. And this powers the 242 Method.

For a long time, I never understood the program hop mentality. But it finally hit me: the Coolidge effect. The Coolidge effect says males will always show interest in potential new sexual partners.

So it doesn't matter how good you have it now. If something new comes along, it's attractive. Superstars cheat on their supermodel wives. Wives and husbands even cheat on their superstars and supermodels.

And since jackasses like me release new stuff frequently, you always want to cheat on your program.

First, well, sorry about that.

Second, you can't win a fight against your physiology. Don't even try. Embrace your promiscuity and find friends with benefits.

The 242 Method is one of those friends.

### **A note on the format**

This isn't a traditionally written book. I chose to organize my ideas as separate entities, naturally rolling from one to the other as they flowed through my mind. So instead of producing prolific prose, which I'm not really good at anyway, each idea is blocked off.

### **A note on other shenanigans**

This isn't a program. I just wanted to get that out of the way right now. You won't find an exact prescription (although there are examples). Doing so would kind of defeat the purpose of the book.

Maybe in the future. But try to extract the essence from all of this. It's what's most important.

# CHAPTER RANDOM

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## ANALOGIES

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OR WHY YOUR TRAINING IS LIKE COFFEE

CHEESE AND SEX

### Cheat day adventures

Every Sunday— my “cheat day”—I enjoy a cup of flavored coffee. Drinking coffee in itself isn’t anything out of the ordinary, as I drink it daily. But the flavoring adds a twist, and it’s a decision not taken lightly.

Like a pig being roasted, the K-Cup tower is slowly rotated. My eyes scan the packaging. I’m a sucker for good branding and design. Whatever catches my fancy is thrown in the Keurig, is brewed, and is mine to savor.

But there's something that always prevents a fairy tale ending: 97% of the time, I hate the flavoring.

I like my coffee, or, even better, my Americano, just like my metal: black.

So if I'm continually disappointed by the failure of artificial flavoring's ability to massage my taste buds, why do I return every week?

I have no idea.

Because it's kind of fun? Kind of adventurous? (Great life I live, right? Getting a kick from drinking flavored coffee.)

And I can't help but think this is how the majority of people construct training programs. They already have something solid—their black coffee—yet they're compelled to extend their tentacles into different areas.

**There's something for everyone, but nothing for *everyone***

Unless my coffee adventuring gives me cancer (from the plastics or artificial flavoring), being dissatisfied every week isn't a big deal. But

when it comes to exercises and programs, getting caught up in mass selection leads to failure.

There's something out there for everyone. But everything isn't for everyone. Exercises, exercise methods, and programs are personal.

## **The Strip District**

Here in Pittsburgh there is a part of town called the Strip District. It's a bunch of vendors, shops, and stores located on a centralized street.

About a year ago, I was on a quest for cheese. So I went to the Strip District, and went into this big Italian shop that sells over one-hundred varieties of cheese. One. Hundred. Different. Cheeses.

When my number was called, I was lost in a sea of choice. The monger asked me to name three cheeses I liked.

Mozzarella, provolone, and muenster.

Within thirty seconds I was out of the store, cheese in hand.

One cheese out of over one-hundred. (It was Alta Badia, by the way. And it was fantastic.)

It's easy to see a big selection and want samples of everything.

“Ooh, hip thrusts.”

“Ooh, good mornings.”

“Ooh, incline flies.”

“Ooh, squeeze presses.”

Oohs and ahhs can last a long time. A lonnng time.

The reason why the selection is so vast is because everyone has different tastes. The backing behind the 242 Method is to narrow exercise selection into, at maximum, two enjoyable lower body lifts and two enjoyable upper body lifts.

### **Find your cheese**

Finding your own Alta Badia is tough. It's why the majority of people can't write a program for themselves.

I couldn't pick out a cheese myself. The monger did it for me based on what I liked. Without him, I would have been lost. But he delivered and that was it. I didn't question him. I didn't wonder about the other cheeses.

This all, of course, has relevance, and the 242 Method never “fully” hit me until I took a long look back at both my own training and my coaching client’s training.

## **Define yourself by your struggle**

A few months ago, I evaluated my training evolution across the six-and-change years that I’ve dabbled in this space. And, although embarrassing, I’m not afraid to spill the beans.

In 9th grade, a girl told me I had boobs. And that hits a self-conscious kid hard. So over my training career, I obsessed over my chest because my lower pecs have always dominated my upper pecs.

At first, I listened to powerlifters and benched. My lower chest grew further out of proportion, leading me to more unhappiness. So I switched to a different angle press. Then, after feeling weak, I hopped back to benching. And then benching did the same thing it did before, so I searched for another exercise. After that, another. And another. And another.

To this day, my pressing strength is awful—one of the reasons you never see me write much about pressing. (Outside of my [dumbbell](#)

[floor press](#) article, which was my Alta Badia last year during softball and frisbee season as my shoulder was a wreck.)

In six years, I've gotten nowhere with my pressing exercises. Yet, from a muscular standpoint, I've surely gotten somewhere. So I looked back at the exercises I have progressed on, strength wise. To my surprise, there's really only two: the deadlift and the chin-up.

Sure, when I first started I could only squat 95 pounds and have since squatted 405 (even though, both times, I hurt my back). But outside of the mileage put on my body with the sheer volume of exercise, the two primary drivers behind where I am today have been the chin-up and the deadlift.

### **The big question**

If two exercises were the primary drivers of my own personal physical gains—from a strength standpoint—why are we worried about finding, testing, and using something that likely won't work as well as what's been shown to work for years?

### **The downfalls of choice**

Every week, I try a different coffee because I can. Because *the selection*

*is available*. Because the Coolidge effect says I will.

When it comes to training and hopping from program to program and exercise to exercise, even the littlest bit of equipment gives multitudes of choice.

This past year alone I program hopped. Yeah, me. The same guy that once compared program hopping to clubbing baby seals.

We can't run from choice, or our desire to try different things, without causing problem. Instead, let's embrace it.

### **We are all fourteen year old kids**

The exploratory mechanism encouraging program hopping is innate. Deep down, we're all fourteen year old horny adolescent boys. We want to have sex with every girl we see, even if they only mildly peak curiosity.

The experience itself can be the same every time. It can end in satisfaction, dissatisfaction, or hilarity (if you're Tucker Max). Doesn't matter.

The selection—the freedom to choose—is what fulfills, not the result itself.

### **Find a sugar momma**

Horny adolescent boys want someone that provides steady sex. But that's a problem considering their promiscuity.

Finding the partner of your dreams doesn't guarantee immediate acceptance. Sometimes people aren't ready for the commitment. They want to experience new things—codeword for having hot anonymous sex.

But getting married early isn't the answer either.

Best case scenario: have a friend with benefits, allowing you to graze the plains as desired.

# CHAPTER FITNESS

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## ADVENTURES

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### OR WHY THE INDUSTRY IS CONFUSING YOU

#### **The fitness industry's problem**

The fitness industry has a problem. Not an information problem, but a *direction* problem. There are so many paths; the paths themselves are overwhelming—even though they all lead to the same place.

Trust me, I know how it goes. You program hop after seeing fancy new gadgets and gizmos. A few months later, you realize that your original program was likely the way to go. You ditch your new one. It takes one month to get back to where you were before you switched. And by that time, four months of your training life have been wasted, making you impatient and—ironically enough—more likely to program hop because you're now looking for a program that's so good it can make up for the results you didn't get over the past four months.

You don't need a new program. You need a mindset. A mindset that embraces minimalism, because "basic" and "simple" is what paves the road to solid gains. (And being able cheat on your significant other and get away from it.

### **Popular set exercise programs**

Most programs out there are three or four day per week training routines centered around the squat, bench press, overhead press, and deadlift.

They are popular because they are safe, reliable, and generally decent programs. For an average person, they are almost fool proof.

If I recommend one to you—a popular practice—and you don't see results, *you're* at fault. Not me. So they are always recommended to people looking for programs.

It's just like any recommendation: it better be reliable. No one recommends a crapshoot. No one refers a friend to a new restaurant unless they visited it themselves and have verified its worthiness.

## Program hopping

People hate choice. But they love thinking they have the ability to choose. So even if a program has choice built in, no one *really* wants it.

They want to know what rowing variation to use. They want to know what the best bench press assistance exercise is. They want to know how many sets and reps to do.

They want to do what's best. And since they trust the program maker, it's the maker's job to take decisions out of their hands.

People want reliability. They want their chocolate chip cookies to be the same as everyone else's. They want to fit in with the masses.

But this is short lived.

Initially, no one *really* wants choice. They just want the feeling of having choice. But eventually, everyone wants the *actual* choice. Safe and reliable programs are only appealing for a little while. And when that little while ends, riskier "new age" becomes appealing.

The same thing that attracts eventually repels.

You can be fine with your girlfriend for a long time. But the Coolidge effect is real.

## **Traditional scheming**

The classic four day per week template—regardless of the specifics—is usually an upper and lower body split with one main focus daily. Assistance work and other shenanigans are thrown in to enhance the main exercise. So all four days end up being rather exhaustive.

Take an overhead press day, for example. After doing overhead presses, assistance exercises like upright rows, lateral raises, dips, and skull crushers fill in the rest of the workout. But because they are designated as “assistance,” they are usually taken to failure.

But assistance work is *assistance* for a reason. Does it make sense to expel so much muscular and nervous energy performing it?

## **Rethinking traditional scheming**

On most four day templates, each day has some mentally stressful or boundary pushing exercise, whether it’s repping out a main lift or taking an assistance lift to failure.

There's also exercise overlap. Rows and chins intertwine with front squats and deadlifts. Just because something is "upper" and something is "lower" doesn't mean they are mutually exclusive.

So there's mental recovery and physical recovery issues on most four day programs.

### **Rethinking assistance work**

If assistance work is nothing more than *assistance*, should it be taken to failure? Or is going through the motions with some intensity and meaning "enough?"

Wouldn't training it exhaustively turn it into a main exercise?

From a mental and energy expenditure perspective, most people put more stock into assistance lifts because they aren't as physically demanding. Is it sensible?

If turkey is the main attraction on Thanksgiving, shouldn't it get the most prep attention?

What if the turkey was left to burn in favor of concocting a slew of mashed potatoes? And the mashed potatoes were awesomely

presented in massive proportions? (I'm not sure *I* would complain about this.) Wouldn't the potatoes—a usual side dish—now be the main attraction?

Should the side dishes compliment, and not exhaust, the main dish?

### **The concept of main lifts**

I think the concept of main lifts is a bit dysfunctional because everyone associates “main lift” with barbells. Why can't a chin-up be a main lift? A dip?

The popular answer to this is: they can't be loaded or progressed as easily, readily, or tangibly.

So?

Does that automatically bump them down to a second tier of care?

By the same logic, using front squats as a main lift over back squats freaks some people out. But does it matter if the back squat can be loaded more?

The front squat can be overloaded by the same mechanism (barbell

and plates) and *it's still a squat*.

Isn't that what matters?

### **All about the weird**

The fitness industry is in a mass rut. Go to any beginner forum and see how many people recommend either Starting Strength or 5/3/1.

Hint: it's a lot because they are safe, reliable, and easy choices.

If you can't progress on these program, well then that's *your* problem. After all, *everyone* else progresses.

But do they?

And what did people do before these programs existed?

Sadly, I've even fielded questions like, "is it possible to get strong without Starting Strength?"

Of course it is. But *everyone else*, in today's world, does Starting Strength.

But I'm not interested in *everyone* anymore. I'm interested in those that are willing to de-conceptualize the idea of main and assistance lifts.

I want to talk to those that have weighted muscle-ups as their "main lift," because they're bold enough to break away from the pack and create new methods.

## Rescheming

Even assuming a traditional four day split centered around the bench press, overhead press, squat, and deadlift, why are each separated on their own day? Can't they be tiered?

For instance:

<b>Day One</b>	<b>Day Two</b>
Back Squat	Deadlift
Overhead Press	Bench Press
Best Back Squat Assistance	Best Deadlift Assistance
Best Overhead Press Assistance	Best Bench Press Assistance

That way there's only two *big* mentally and physically taxing days per week.

Of course, the question then becomes, “What do I do the other days of the week?”

My response: “Does it matter?”

# CHAPTER PROGRAM

## DESIGN

### OR HOW TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE NORM

#### **The big problem**

People want cookie cutter. They want to fit in with the masses. That is, until they see someone with a gigantic unique cookie and get jealous.

It's like learning how to drive. When you first learn, you can't look anywhere but the immediate road in front of you. One year later, you're texting and mooning school buses.

Set programs only work as long as we're comfortable with the

settings. The fact that the program *works* is secondary.

Although contradictory, people rarely want something that *works*.

They want *immediate progress*.

How many people abandon ship after realizing that doing 5/3/1 and starting at a 10% drop off means it will be *months* before any sign of progress is had? A lot. And one of the many reasons people don't start at the 10% drop.

And since no program, unless you're a beginner, yields immediate results, long term results are irrelevant.

Any set program, no matter how well constructed, gets boring. The Coolidge effect.

This quest for immediate progress fuels program hopping. New exercises lend themselves to immediate results and instant gratification, so everyone wants to incorporate them into previously set programs.

We hear this continually as: "When should I do "x" exercise in "y" program?"

In nearly every case, however, progress isn't a result of assistance exercise. The assistance work is there only because it's expected to be there and it gives a semblance of choice.

You can't have a hotdog stand without hotdogs. But most hotdog stands have condiments. Are condiments necessary? No. But they're there.

### **New designations**

Instead of having “main lifts” and “assistance lifts,” it's better to have three categories:

Marriage Lifts – A select few “forever” lifts—the one's you never abandon. It could be as little as two or as many as four.

Friends With Benefits (FWB) Lifts – A pool of useful lifts that interest you and wouldn't mind doing regularly, but wouldn't propose to.

The Masses Lifts – Where most lifts are. The ones that don't readily interest you, but wouldn't be averse to giving a shot to.

## **The backing behind the categories**

The best way to describe the Marriage Lifts: put a ring on them. Pledge your love to them and promise to never abandon them.

FWB Lifts interest you. Maybe they are the ones that got away. Maybe they are the high school crush. But for whatever reason, they're no longer in your life. But you already experienced them and you know you enjoy their company.

The Masses Lifts are those you have no experience with, but would be willing to have one night stand with. From there, if you enjoyed their company, they might become FWB Lifts. If not, they go back into the Masses.

## **A better program**

Consistency is one the most important aspects of any program. So the best program is one that promotes consistent training with the Marriage Lifts.

Having four mind blowing days is a tough operation because four days of the week you have to be "on." What if you slept bad? Had to stay up late? Had bad eating patterns?

And you have to show up. What if you can't make it to the gym one day? Bye bye consistency.

So on most programs, four days consume your week. Hair cuts are rescheduled. Doctors appointments, cancelled. And before you know it your entire week is shot because your schedule revolves around four days that have to be perfectly planned to maximize results on each day.

## **Power of two**

Sticking to just two “heavy” days per week—not to be confused with two *total* training days per week—does a few things.

- It means we only have to be “on” and “in the game” half the time.
- It promotes consistency. Bring it twice, that's all.
- It's easy to work around schedule conflicts.
- It makes recovery easier.
- It promotes experimentation.

- It keeps the focus where it should be.
- It's easier to align the stars two, not four, times.

## **The other days**

What about the other one, two, or three days of training? What should be done on those days?

Whatever you want.

Try out the silly assistance exercises. Do some of this and a little bit of that.

It doesn't matter as long as it's doesn't destroy the body, intensity-wise.

# **CHAPTER RECOVERY**

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# **AND NERVOUS SYSTEM**

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## **Rethinking recovery**

The 48 hour rule states a muscle needs 48 hours to recover.

The 48 hour rule needs to die.

What if I do one set of squats at 60% of my max weight for 50% of my max reps? How much recovery do I need?

How do I walk up steps after a heavy squatting session if my muscles need 48 hours to recover?

## **High level athletes**

Go heavy or go home.

That's the modus operandi of most lifters. But perhaps it's why Pavel

and Mark Reifkind can joke about something they call the “tough guy cycle”: Heavy, heavier, even heavier, injury, light...(this originally appeared on [Tim Ferriss’s blog](#)).

Some people are adverse to “light” days.

But nearly all high level athletes have “light” days. Sprinters jog and do aerobic work when they aren’t sprinting at max speed.

“Light” days promote blood flow and recovery to tissues stressed the day prior. Even though the same muscles are trained, the lower intensity work becomes somewhat *stimulating*, meaning they feel *better* after having done it.

### **Lighter workouts**

Lighter workouts are side dishes to the main course. Sometimes, they just need to be there. And most times, the meal is never ruined by their presence, but rather enhanced.

### **A note on frequency**

I’m looking at hockey schedules right now—one of the most grueling sports, schedule-wise—and, for the most part, there aren’t more than

three games per week.

Yet we choose to have *four* heavy, mind blowing sessions per week. We're afraid of training the entire body in one session and we're afraid of foregoing our wonderful assistance exercises. And the only way to accommodate both is to spread the workload over four days.

### **Cut off with the nervous system**

How do you know what exercises would be better suited for a gut busting day?

The nervous system and mental arousal.

According to an old graphic that belonged to Charlie Francis, here are some breakdowns when it comes to nervous system involvement on exercises:

**Explosive Work – 90%**

**Lower Body Work – 70% to 40%**

**Upper Body Work – 40% to 25%**

**Isolation Work – 25% and lower**

If you're strictly controlling the stressor, 40-25% total motor recruitment is the cutoff with barbell exercises, with 25% being the conservative and "just in case" marker. *But there are exceptions.*

Dumbbell work, stopping well short of failure, and controlling tempo can all help lower overall stress and recruitment.

For instance, training heavy bench presses or overhead presses, while hitting 40% or so on motor recruitment, also require a certain mental intensity to do maximally (or even near maximally).

But *dumbbell* presses are easier to teeter from one side to the other, meaning they can be less stressful if that's the goal.

Barbell work is best served on heavy days. Dumbbell work can float around.

## **Powerlifters and bodybuilders**

Ever wonder why powerlifters usually cap their training at four days per week? And why bodybuilders seem to train five or six days per week?

Powerlifters train the nervous system more intensively. They use their

entire body to bench press with the goal of moving as much weight as possible. The more muscles they involve, the better. More muscle means more weight, which means more nervous system involvement.

Bodybuilders, however, focus the stress into a few targeted muscles. They *don't* want the legs driving weight during the bench press. They would rather the chest and arms do most of the work. So they aren't *as* concerned with total bar weight as much as they are about stressing muscle groups maximally.

Since powerlifters use more muscle mass and work at a higher percentage of their one repetition max, they can't train as frequently due to nervous system fatigue.

Bodybuilders use less muscle mass and work at a lower percentage of their one repetition max. They can train more frequently.

### **On isolation exercises**

Bodybuilders use isolation exercises because they stress individual muscles to their capacity. But an often lost piece of this is that isolation exercises don't take a huge bite out of the nervous system.

A bodybuilder does preacher curls. A discus thrower does power curls. Is it any wonder who will be fresher after this workout on both a muscular and neural level?

This also explains strength differences. A powerlifter will always bench press more than a bodybuilder. It's not that bodybuilders aren't strong (they often are). But they care less about the absolute numbers and more about local muscle fatigue and overload.

A bodybuilder may only bench 275 but the chest and arms do 90% of the work. A powerlifter may bench more but when comparing overall workload distribution, his arms and chest may only be doing 70% of the work.

So bodybuilders aren't weak, they just voluntarily neglect the philosophy that more weight is better and, instead, maximally stress the targeted muscle.

## **Machines**

This is also why bodybuilders do more machine work: there's less nervous system stress. It also helps them tap into their mental connection with a muscle better, localizing the strain into targeted tissue.

# CHAPTER FREQUENCY

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## AND INJURIES

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### Theory of injuries

Most injuries occur from mismanaging stress and recovery.

When I was eighteen, playing basketball, and training five days per week, my knees didn't stand a chance. And after they were ruined, I had to seek help elsewhere to mask the pain.

This is what [An Athlete's Guide to Chronic Knee Pain](#) is about—how to stress the patellar tendon *less* by integrating the muscles of the hip and foot *more*.

### Injuries related to training

Managing recovery from intensive bouts of activity is important to prevent injuries.

As mentioned, splitting days into upper and lower still lends to an overlap of training muscles. And, truly, there's no problem with that. The body is a capable machine and can handle muscular workload often.

What it can't handle as well, however, is nervous workload.

### **Injuries and the nervous system**

Injuries—perhaps even muscle imbalances—are likely caused by incorrect neural firing. The nervous system gets burnt out when asked to repeatedly deliver intensive contractions. Patterns get dysfunctional. Injury occurs.

Baseball is a key example. One pitch rarely destroys an arm. Injuries are often forecasted with tightness and fatigue. Yet they continue to throw.

Stay fresh. Stay healthy.

### **Loading and the spine**

Like Chad Waterbury, I believe that loading the spine is reserved for heavy days and should be approached with the minimum effective

dose mentality.

In Waterbury's opinion, bodyweight freaks can train frequently because their spine stays fresh.

The skeptics question: "But Olympic Weightlifters train daily, don't they?"

Yes, they do. But most of them also live with nagging pains. And in the case that they don't, the volume is gradually introduced over time and the intensity of each day largely depends on "feel."

So it can be done, sure. I've deadlifted every day for two months straight. Incredibly, I was healthier than I ever had been in my life. But it was all "easy" and non-hyped efforts. The spine, while loaded, wasn't overtaxed.

### **Primitive man and recovery**

"Primitive man never took rest days," is another silly argument because primitive man never exercised recreationally.

Hop into the wild. Run around. Hunt. Fish. Do all of that stuff as often as you can, and you won't have recovery problems.

But that's way different than back squatting every day.

## **Respecting the nervous system and being soft**

Somehow, somehow, bodybuilders tend to think that anyone training less than five days per week is soft.

And when you mention the nervous system, they brush it off, again, citing a pansy mentality.

But there's nothing pansy about getting strong. There's nothing pansy about squatting, pressing, and pulling. There's nothing wrong with leaving some physical reserves in the tank for doing backflips, enjoying life, and conquering the world. There's nothing pansy about making room for some "me time" *all while building yourself into a kick ass, nervous system optimized physical creation.*

I respect bodybuilders. I respect powerlifters. I respect everyone. Everyone thinks differently. So let everyone have their opinions. But respect everyone equally.

# CHAPTER TRAINING

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## METHODS

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### Maximal effort and high frequency

America has a maximal effort obsession. Refer back to the typical powerlifting cycle.

We often associate **maximum muscular contraction** with **strength**. Westside popularized the three ways to get the former with the dynamic effort method (DE)—lifting a light(er) weight fast—the repeated effort method (RE)—lifting a light(er) weight to failure—and the maximal effort method (ME)—lifting a maximal weight.

**But achieving a maximum muscular contraction is different than getting stronger.** And, for most people, a maximum muscular contraction akin to a 1RM never happens—even during a sport—because that kind of effort isn't repeatable. Football players can't gas themselves on one play. They have to last the entire game.

## Submaximal Training

The max effort method has been glorified for the wrong reasons. The following quote is taken from Westside Barbell's Website:

The majority of the Soviet training was centered around 75-85% of a one-rep max for about 50% of all lifts, and 20% are done at 90-100%. The Bulgarians trained mostly at 90-100% max. Circa-max weights are 90-97%. The Bulgarian system produced the highest results in weightlifting. Why? They handled the highest average weights most often. It's that simple. Yes, they had used a very select group of lifters, but that system was the best.

Glancing at that quote, it's quite convincing that the Bulgarian system was superior. So we should go maximal or go home, right? But here's what gets lost: **you can still get strong training primarily in the 75-85% range**, and this is something Dr. Yessiss confirms.

About 70% of strength work should be in the 70-85% range, which actually allows you to develop greater strength than when you lift only in the 90-100% zone.

And considering most Soviets were only a few pounds behind the Bulgarians in the *OLYMPICS*, you can get *pretty damn strong*.

## **Two days of stress**

Concentrating the most stressful training into two training sessions per week guarantees recovery, provided light days aren't abused. And while the body is likely capable of handling *more* stress—or more frequent stress, at the least—the question is: why go there?

I'm all for experimentation and pushing boundaries. If you feel like training every day, go. I trained every day last summer and I learned a lot. But I also had the luxury of time and a unique situation with a broken foot.

But you can also play it conservative, recover in time, and continually make progress. Beats teetering on the brink of injury.

## **Pareto's principle**

A guy named Vilfredo Pareto, a turn of the century Italian economist, realized that eighty percent of the land was owned by twenty percent of the people, and that twenty percent of his pea pods produced eighty percent of his peas. Since then, this eighty-twenty distribution is used to explain a number of phenomena.

Perhaps the prime Pareto example in the training world is the philosophy of legendary Bulgarian weightlifting coach, Ivan Abadjiev. Abadjiev's original training programs consisted of nineteen exercises that eventually narrowed down to five: the snatch, the power snatch, the clean and jerk, the power clean, and the front squat.

That's all.

The 242 Method is classic Pareto. Bunching work into two big sessions per week means that the meat of usefulness is always the focal point. And from a nutrition and life view, only two days have to be optimized.

Focus on the meat.

### **The ultimate benefits of twice**

Solar eclipses happen about every 1.5 years. If you like watching eclipses, you're going to do everything in your power to maximize the experience.

But what if they were once per month? Once per week? Four times per week?

Novelty decreases.

By following most templates, attention is spread over four days. If one day goes wrong, how much are you maximizing from that day?

But isn't it easier only getting jacked twice in one week? Wouldn't you look forward to those sessions more?

And from a logistics perspective, only two—not four—days have to be perfect. Nutrition and preparation can be spot on.

## **Strength is a skill**

Every exercise is a different entity. Each woman has their own intricacies. The answer to pleasing Gertrude isn't learning how to please Gretchen.

Pavel and Dan John are among a new wave classifying strength as skill, not ability. Fancy that. You learn how to become strong.

Just like throwing a javelin, hitting opposite field, and putting top spin on a ping pong ball, skills require practice. That's all. Long hours of deliberate practice. So when you see high level athletes doing remarkable things, you know they practiced for years. Yet when your

squat stalls for two weeks, you seek answers everywhere. Maybe it's weak quadriceps? So you start front squatting. Maybe you're weak out of the hole? So you add bottom up squats. Maybe it's your lower back? So you add good mornings.

Sooner or later you're focusing on everything but squats. Struggling baseball players don't start swinging golf clubs, cricket bats, and tennis rackets to get their swing back. They stick with the baseball bat. And they practice. For days and days.

Notice I said "practice." It doesn't always have to be gut wrenching, adrenal busting intensity. But you have to put in the hours and learn how to become strong.

### **Practicing makes perfection**

Having two sessions per week with our Marriage Lifts means we're practicing them *at least* once or twice per week. That's a minimum of fifty practice sessions in one year. Perhaps even one hundred.

Won't you be better at something after fifty practice sessions? One hundred?

# CHAPTER THE PROGRAM

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## **The set-up**

Alternating between high and low intensity days was a system I learned when interning under James “The Thinker” Smith at the University of Pittsburgh. James even wrote a manual about this system, which has since been pulled from shelves.

This is an adaptation of the high-low method, customizable for just about anyone.

## **Intensive vs. extensive**

Before going over the set up, it’s important to understand exercise intensities. This goes back to nervous system involvement.

The smart sports training folk differentiate intensities with two designations: intensive exercise and extensive exercise.

But I like keeping it real.

## **Intensive exercise**

Heavy shit. Shit that requires a lot of focus and energy. Squats, deadlifts, throws, cleans, benching, overhead pressing, and most free weight compound barbell exercises fall in this category. Sprints, high intensity interval training, and most “finishers” do too.

## **Extensive exercise**

Therapeutic shit. Shit that makes you feel better after having done it. Exercises with capped intensities not taken to failure like machine guided exercises and dumbbell exercises. Bodybuilding pump up single joint exercises and steady state jogging go here too.

But remember: capped intensities. Sprinting and jogging are both considered “running.” Sprinting, however, is intensive. Jogging, extensive.

So there’s a big difference between a maximal bench press, and a dumbbell bench press with a capped intensity not taken to failure.

## **Good old Robbie**

Robbie Robinson once said, “stimulate, don’t annihilate.” Robbie was also a fan of power cleans, romanian deadlifts, bench presses, squats, and chin-ups.

Robbie was a good dude.

But he didn’t believe in obliterating muscles, nor do I.

Think of intensive sessions as stimulating workouts. Get in quality work.

Think of extensive sessions as therapeutic workouts. The movement tempo is slower and controlled, promoting blood flow and circulation.

## The general set-up

The three most common program designs are:

- Four days per week
  - on-on-off-on-on-off-off
- Four days per week
  - on-off-on-off-on-off-on
- Three days per week
  - off-on-off-on-off-on-off

Getting specific for the nervous system and heavy and light days, it looks like this:

- Four days per week
  - heavy-light-off-heavy-light-off-off
- Four days per week
  - light-off-heavy-off- light-off- heavy
- Three days per week
  - off-heavy-off-light-off- heavy-off

## **The 242 Method**

The “242” in the 242 Method stands for two exercise—the Marriage Lifts—being done twice every week. Two-for-two. This is the heavy day.

The light days are for scratching exercise itches and experimenting. There can be a plan, yeah. But it’s alright if that plan changes or exercises are substituted because what really matters happens on the heavy day.

Consistency is king. You can program hop and try all you want on your light days as long as your heavy days remain.

## **Alterations**

Since creating this program for myself and clients, I noticed that picking only two exercises was troublesome. So I bumped up the Marriage Lift number by two, settling in at two upper body exercises and two lower body exercise.

The best part is that I can still call it the 242 Method. #winning

## Examples

Let's say you pick back squats, Romanian deadlifts, chin-ups, and push presses. Those are your four exercises. Your babies. Your Marriage Lifts. *Your LIFE lifts*. The lifts you said "I do" to. At no point in the foreseeable future do you imagine *not* doing them. So pick the ones you have a *true* love for because you're going to be doing them every week.

### Template 1 –Loyal Partner Program

The basic template is this: do all four lifts on every intensive day. Using the above example, you would do back squats, romanian deadlifts, chin-ups, and push presses in the same session, and do them again for a second intensive session later in the week.

Now, the loading and schemes can change. You can do 5/3/1 with them one day and bust out 5x10 the other day. How you arrange the specifics of the progression are completely up to you.

### Template 2 – Friends With Benefits Program

The Loyal Partner Program, although ace, won't deliver the variation most people want. Damn Coolidge effect.

The Friends With Benefits Program is similar to the example on page 21. Assuming two intensive sessions per week (the standard for the 242 Method), you can break down the Marriage Lifts into two different sessions with one big helper exercise—a FWB Lift—tagging along.

Just make sure the FWB lift isn't one you would do on a light day. Remember, light days are great for isolation exercises and lower intensity, pump producing, intensity capped work.

Here's an example of the FWB Program using the same four Marriage Lifts:

Day one – squats, chins, front squats, barbell rows

Day two – romanian deadlifts, push press, good mornings, overhead presses

You can also do the rotation thing and put rows on day two and overhead presses on day one. Same with the front squats and good mornings.

The FWB Program's downside is that you get less practice with your Marriage Lifts. The upside is that you can switch the helper exercises in an out while maintaining a semblance of program structure.

But I know some of you will want to experiment with more taxing exercises that *don't* fit into the lower intensity category. This is your program.

### **Template 3 – Laser Focus**

The Laser Focus template is very similar to the Friends with Benefits template only *you narrow down your Marriage Lifts to two movements*.

There are four Marriage Lift slots. But if you only want to fill two, fine by me.

Day one – deadlifts, chin-ups

Day two – deadlifts, chin-ups

This is for those strapped for time or for those that don't have much total body hypertrophy need.

## Using small exercises to fix unevenness

Say you're a bold soul that picked front squats and chin-ups your two Marriage Lifts on the Laser Focus Program. So twice per week, you ritualistically front squat and chin-up.

Sweet.

But let's say you wanted to get more hamstring work in. The common choice would be to add a FWB Lift and do it after front squats as outlined in Template 2. A romanian deadlift? Or perhaps a good morning?

You could very well do that and have a hybrid Laser Focus and Friends With Benefits template. If this makes sense to you, roll with it. If not, forget it.

So say you didn't want to do anything else on your high intensity days but front squat and chin-up. The alternative is to hit the hamstrings and posterior side with a lower intensity exercise on the low intensity day. So something like a back extension or a reverse hyper is a great choice.

For the upper body, this could be like foregoing the bench press as a main lift and rocking smooth dumbbell and hammer strength pressing on low intensity days.

Machines take less CNS involvement, making them a viable option for evening out front and back workload while still respecting the 242 Method's guidelines.

## **Total balance**

There are four slots for our Marriage Lifts—the four that structure the 242.

For all around development, even from an aesthetic standpoint, it's best to hit every “major” area of the body. Pick a squat, a deadlift, a press, and a pull—essentially an upper body push and pull, and a lower body push and pull.

I know you're complaining about having to choose between bench presses and overhead presses. Between chin-ups and rows.

But make the choice and stick with it. You can be mediocre at a lot of things, or really good at a few things. Which do you think will be better in the long run?

The exception to this is someone on the Laser Focus Program that only wants to focus on two exercises.

Robby Robinson used to be a fan of squats, straight leg deadlifts, chin-ups, and bench presses. Those were his big four. He must have known about the 242 Method a long time ago.

# CHAPTER PROGRESSION

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## Home for a beginner

A beginner should do Template 1, The Loyal Partner Program. Exercises should be done, *and progressed*, every session.

This is a concept that was brought back to life by Mark Rippetoe called linear progression. Find a weight you can handle for a desired number of repetitions and simply move up bit by bit from there.

For example, let's say you want to do four sets of six repetitions. There's two ways to go about this.

You can warm-up to your heaviest set (money set method), or you can do every set with the same weight (sets across method). The important part is that you progress day in and day out and keep the scheme consistent.

So using the first method, the money set method, if you're squatting 135 for six reps, you can warm up to your last set like this:

- Bar x 6 (always warm up with the bar, but never count it towards total sets)
- 6x65,
- 6x95,
- 6x115,
- 6x135\*

Your goal is to then hit 140x6 the next session.

If you're using the second method, the sets across method, it would look like this:

- Bar x 6
- 3ishx95
- 4x6x135\*

Your goal is to hit 4x6x140 the next session.

Either method works as long as you're consistent.

And, of course, adjust the warm-ups as you get stronger.

But do your Marriage Lifts twice per week using this five pound progression on both days.

### **The better beginner**

You will hit a point where adding five pounds is tough. You might even fail a workout. When this happens, scale back 10% and re-do the five pound progression *on only one of the two days*.

On the beginner program, weight is added to the bar every day. The lifts are trained twice per week, so that's ten pounds added to the bar, total, in one week.

On the better beginner program, after the 10% scale back, weight is added to the bar *once* per week. So that's five pounds added to the bar, total, in one week.

On the other day of the better beginner program, pick a different repetition range and experiment with new schemes.

## **The advanced**

After the better beginner program runs its course, the options are in your court. You can choose from any of the templates mentioned above and use any scheme of progression you want.

That's the beauty of this method. It's more of a principle and less of a program. Just stick to something and work hard. Chances are, even if you pick a sub-par training method, the fact that you're training the most important lifts once or twice per week means you won't get lost.

So sometimes you may be inching to the goal, other times you may be hopping. But you're always moving in the right direction.

## **The low intensity extensive day**

The extensive day is your creative vent and it serves a few purposes:

- Gives you a day to try new things without detracting you from the main goal
- Gives you freedom and flexibility
- Gives the muscles blood flow and can promote recovery
- Gives you a chance to go wild on smaller, isolation exercises

Don't worry about training the same muscles on back to back days. But keep tabs on exercise selection and training intensity.

Say you wanted to do incline dumbbell bench presses on the low intensity day. That's fine. Just respect how your body feels from whatever was done in the session prior.

Keep the set sub-maximal and don't invest much emotion. Hit smooth reps, feel it in the muscles, and stop with 2 or 4 reps in the tank.

They are side dishes, not the main course.

Feel free to go wild on isolation exercises. Do a lot. Do a little. It doesn't matter. Try to think of this day as a bodybuilder pump up day, avoiding failure on the bigger lifts.

## **Have two faces**

The heavy day is your powerlifting and Olympic weightlifting day. Use the entire body, drive up your poundages, and get silly strong. It's your nervous system's day.

The light day is your bodybuilding day. Dial it back and focus stress into individual muscles. Use less intense exercises and focus on getting pumped up. It's your muscular system's day. And, if needed, your day to be unfaithful.

In Season 5: Episode 65 of *Seinfeld*, Elaine conceded to having sex with Jerry to save their friendship.

If you need to cheat on your exercise program to save your consistency and long term progress, use the light day.

### **The breakdown**

Marriage Lifts are *only* done on high intensity days\*. FWB Lifts are more useful on high intensity days, but they can swing low if the right mentality is taken.

Remember, sometimes side dishes just need to be there. They don't need to outshine the main dish.

The Masses Lifts are best served on low intensity days.

## The “see note” symbol \*

“Marriage Lifts are *only* done on high intensity days\*.”

*Unless* your Marriage Lift is a bodyweight exercise like a dip or chin-up. These can be trained back to back *much easier* than barbell lifts because they don’t stress the spine.

So if you wanted to hit dips or chins (or both) on a low intensity day, just respect the guidelines: control the tempo, make it smooth, make it therapeutic, stop shy of failure, encourage blood flow, don’t invest mentally, and keep it tonic.

## Energy System Training

Explosive work, HIIT, sprinting, jumping, most “finishers,” and anything else of the sorts is high intensity.

Low intensity energy system training is cardiac work, aerobic work, and tempo running. (I’m currently revising a book about aerobic work, stay tuned.)

## **Medium sucks**

This program is heavy and light. No medium.

Medium sucks. Medium makes it easy to slip into heavy when it's not supposed to be.

## **Inseasons and Offseasons**

Using these concepts in the context of sports preparation is a little outside of the scope of this eBook. But take the concepts and apply them to your situation.

See if the sport or practice classifies as a high intensity stressor. If it does, you're likely shortcutting yourself by putting a high intensity day before or after it.

You can toy around with this and try fitting in one meaningful session per week with your Marriage Lifts in a place that doesn't interfere with recovery, competition, or a game. As the for the other day, check out the advanced programming strategies in the pages to come.

## Schemes

The 242 Method isn't a progressive overload scheme. It's not 5/3/1. There are no percentages. It's a way of constructing and conceptualizing stress as it relates to your body. It's a way to organize workouts so as to maximize progress. And most importantly, it's a way to prevent regression (while cheating on your wife).

As Dan John said, "The goal is to keep the goal the goal." The 242 Method lets you do that. And cheat on the goal at the same time. Awesome.

So the method or "program" of progressive overload is yours to choose.

Not the answer you're looking for, I know. For that, I'm sorry. But remember, as long as you're *practicing* the lifts, you're on the right path. It can be a step. It can be a hop. It can be a leap. Or it can be a sprint. But if you're a millimeter closer to where you want to be, it's a win.

Things won't always be perfect. There are ebbs and flows to life. This is natural. Your performance will fluctuated based upon what's going

on in your life. And that's the beauty of the 242 Method. It's highly adaptable to accommodate for these things.

# CHAPTER PROGRAM

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## EXAMPLES

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### **Loyal Partner Program with comments**

Here's a sample program that I created with an attempt to make it as complicated as possible so as to answer as many questions as possible. Hopefully this gives you enough insight to get started.

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
<b><i>Back Squats</i></b> <b><i>Overhead Presses</i></b> <b><i>Romanian Deadlifts</i></b> <b><i>Barbell Rows</i></b>	2 to 4 sets of:  Dumbbell Bench Chin-ups Dips Goblet Squats Hammer Curls Lateral Raises Shrugs Abs Few other areas of interest	<b><i>Back Squats</i></b> <b><i>Overhead Presses</i></b> <b><i>Romanian Deadlifts</i></b> <b><i>Barbell Rows</i></b>	2 to 4 sets of:  Dumbbell Incline Bench Dips Chin-ups Barbell Curls 45 Degree Back Raise Abs Few other areas of interest

- On Monday and Thursday, the Marriage Lifts are done with whatever scheme you prefer.
- Tuesday and Friday are the low intensity days and can be filled with a lot of low intensity things.
- In this example, I included some multi-joint exercises on the low intensity day to show you the versatility of the 242 Method.
- The question is: “Won’t I be sore for Tuesday and Friday, working the same muscles back to back?” The answer is: yeah, sometimes. But remember, Tuesday and Friday aren’t sessions designed to break personal records. That’s why the tempo is controlled and failure is avoided. Just groove reps. Think of flooding the muscle with blood to *help* recovery. Use full ranges of motion and squeeze.

- An example of this would be:
  - Say you can hit 15 reps with 70 pounders on dumbbell bench presses (you know this from past experience).
  - Every week, go in and hit ten reps for three or four sets. No rep is overly difficult. But the goal is to get those 70 pounders to start feeling like 60 pounders. It may take the entire month. But when the 70 pounder and 10<sup>th</sup> rep feels really easy, move to 11 reps. Then 12. Or you can move to the 75's as long as it's not too much too soon.
  - So you can still progress while keeping these easy and relaxed.
- For sake of time, superset things when possible. Perhaps even doing an entire circuit with the exercises.

## Friends With Benefits Program with comments

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<p><b>Back Squats</b> <b>Overhead Presses</b></p> <p>Pick Two:</p> <p>Any squat variation, Any deadlift variation, Any press variation, Any pull variation</p>	<p>2 to 4 sets of:</p> <p>Dumbbell Curls Barbell Curls Diamond Push-Ups French Press Shrugs Calfs Lateral Raises Back Extensions Cable Crossovers Rear Delt Flies Abs</p> <p>Toy around</p>	<p><b>Romanian Deadlifts</b> <b>Barbell Rows</b></p> <p>Pick Two:</p> <p>Any squat variation, Any deadlift variation, Any press variation, Any pull variation</p>	<p>2 to 4 sets of:</p> <p>Dumbbell Curls Barbell Curls Diamond Push-Ups French Press Shrugs Calfs Lateral Raises Back Extensions Cable Crossovers Rear Delt Flies Abs</p> <p>Toy around</p>

- Here we see the FWB template. Monday and Thursday focus on the Marriage Lifts, albeit only two per day. But make no mistake, the back squat, romanian deadlift, overhead press, and barbell row *are* your Marriage Lifts. They are just scattered over two days instead of bunched into one. This leaves room to experiment with other lifts that can't be done on lower intensity days. While you're practicing the Marriage Lifts less often, what's important is that *you're still practicing them regularly*.
- The low intensity day looks more bodybuilding-ish with nearly all isolation exercises and isn't varied from day to day. You don't *have* to vary.

- The lower intensity day has less overall leg volume, and that's twofold:
  - Most leg exercises are high intensity and require spinal loading
  - Most guys don't need *more* leg volume when they're already squatting and pulling regularly. Face it, looks matter. A respectable squat, most times, means good legs. The upper body is trickier and more mentally worrisome.
- I'm not a big fan of this template, and if I had half a brain I wouldn't write about it or include. Not enough practice time with the Marriage Lifts, in my opinion.

## Laser Focus Program with comments

<b><u>Monday</u></b>	<b><u>Tuesday</u></b>	<b><u>Thursday</u></b>	<b><u>Friday</u></b>
<b><i>Front Squat Chin-Ups</i></b>	3 or 4 sets of:  Dips Back Extensions Hammer Curls Lateral Raises Shrugs Swiss Ball Leg Curls Abs Few other areas of interest	<b><i>Front Squat Chin-Ups</i></b>	3 or 4 sets of:  Dips Reverse Hyper Extensions Hammer Curls Lateral Raises Shrugs Swiss Ball Leg Curls Abs Few other areas of interest

- About as simple as it gets. Focus on two lifts and get going.

# CHAPTER ADVANCED

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## STRATEGIES FOR

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## GREEDY BASTARDS

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Right, right, these templates just *aren't enough*.

What if this?

What if that?

What if my hair is one fire? Why can't I do five different presses? Why can't I do this? Why can't I do that? Why am I whining and complaining when a perfectly laid out plan is in front of my face and I'm still too afraid to follow it?

Answer: I don't know. But you're a greedy bastard.

You don't have to take my word for things. You can do whatever you want. Experiment.

But in the name of those people that have come this far, I'll give you *some* light. Here are two ways to go about altering the program if you're a greedy bastard.

### **The low intensity swap**

So you have these four lifts that you're married to. And you should do them twice per week for the rest of your life. Sounds exciting, right?

Alright, I know it doesn't. But if, *and only if*, you need the variation, then swap out a Marriage Lift for a lower intensity worthwhile lift on *one* of your intensive days.

I don't recommend you do this on all of the exercises. In fact, I really don't recommend it at all. This is like a bastardized Friends With Benefits template

But if you wanted to give it a go, alternate between a high intensity and low intensity variation on your Married Lifts. A good example would be one day of push presses and another day of overhead

presses. Deadlifts and snatch grip deadlifts. Back squats and front squats.

But I'm going to warn you: this is too much freedom and your attention diverts from what matters. Don't be a jackass. Instead, follow the next plan.

### **The Pavelizer**

Pavel has this idea of keeping one workout the *exact same* no matter what week it is—and it's an easier workout at that.

So you have four (or two) marriage lifts and are (hopefully) doing them twice per week (unless you're a Friends With Benefits jackass).

If you're advanced, you won't be able to go balls to the wall on both days, which is where a lot of people get hung up.

“Go heavy or go home,” remember?

But instead of picking different lifts and jamming a screw driver in your eye socket from all of the “cheating” you're doing on your Marriage Lifts, here's a simple idea: make one day a *light* day.

Crazy, I know.

On this “light day,” do *the same exact thing* every time you walk into the gym. So let’s go back to Example 1, which has you doing the following:

**Back Squats**

**Overhead Presses**

**Romanian Deadlifts**

**Barbell Rows**

One day focus on leveling up these lifts. You can be on 5/3/1, you can be on a Pavel 5x5 scheme, you can be doing whatever you want that has you working hard.

The next day with the Marriage Lifts, make it a light day. The same “easy workout” week in and week out. Every. Week. **And make it easy.**

So if your max squat is 365, on your light day, squat tonic sets of 225. Make the reps easy and gauge *how difficult the workout feels*. It should probably land around the 50% mark.

Week to week, see how this percentage fluctuates.

If one week it feels like 75%, things are shitty with your recovery.

### **Texas hold ‘em**

The last method is a rip off of the Texas Method, so I’m only scratching.

Day one: higher intensity, higher weight, lower reps.

Day two: lower intensity, lower weight, higher reps.

### **Laser Focus and Friends With Benefits Mesh**

The Laser Focus Program is useful for those that want to experiment more.

You can merge the Laser Focus Program with the Friends With Benefits Program, as I mentioned previously.

So if you chose deadlifts and chin-ups, do them twice per week and pick two FWB lifts to do after them on each day that can revolve at your leisure.

# CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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The 242 Method is a reliable way to track and manage the overall stress imposed on the body. It's not the only way to train. I've been on my fair share of upper-lower splits and even my current, a presses/squats - pulls split (this is my most favorite split to operate from).

Which then begs the question: how the hell do you manage the stressors?

It comes back to the 48 hour rule. Following up a day of deadlifts with squats sounds daunting, but what really matters is *how the deadlifts were done*. With the “go heavy or go home” mentality, we surely run into problems. If you train sensibly, a presses/squats – pulls is not only do-able but also ideal (for reasons beyond the scope of this book).

Having said all of that, however, splits are more effective once you can tune into your body and adjust the volume based upon understanding the workload as it compounds over time from previous training session.

Here's another example. Instead of a bodybuilding split of training three days in a row with legs, torso, and arms, off why not rearrange the split into torso, arms, and then legs? That way the arms day serves as a "break" in between two more intensive days?

*That* is the takeaway with this entire book: to understand how the body deals with recovery and performance.

More importantly than all of that though is that the 242 Method ensures that you're *practicing the lifts that matter*.

I'd be lying to myself if I thought you wouldn't ever use a program outside of the 242 Method. *But you would be a fool not to forget the principles behind the 242 Method when using a different program.*

Remember that you will regress. All of us do. You will program hop here and there. You will hit lows and when you do you'll look everywhere outside of your immediate program for answers.

But stay on the path. The answers are there, it's just a matter of being persistent enough to find them by trudging on instead of wandering in a different direction.

So no matter what kind of specific routine you're operating out of, it all boils down to consistent practice on a handful of lifts. And the only way to practice consistently is to stay healthy.

The 242 Method makes it easy to not only stay healthy (by managing nervous stressors and promoting recovery on light days), but also keeps your head in the right place.

If you found any value in this, I'd really appreciate it if you [shared this eBook](#). Who doesn't like totally free stuff? And this will help spark conversation and perhaps provide a little value to others. So, again, I'd truly appreciate it.

Thanks for reading.